

In Paris and Short of Money

Young Women Who Make Good—The Borrowers—
Elderly Adventuresses—The Stranded Scholar.

PARIS, March 15.—"Paris is a bad place for Americans short of money," I said to the lone girl arriving with \$100 capital. "So is any other place," she answered briefly, intent on her problem.

Later, when she won out, I stopped generalizing. Evidently one girl may.

The girl with the \$100 and a hazy literary programme had wisely begun by letter from America. She thus slipped into the Student's Hostel, the girls' club, patron-

back to tourists: boarder in funds, but I know that she went from the hostel to the Rue de Chevreuse, never quitting the club until she married the dealer in antiques. I will let her state the moral: "I would never have dared it but for the girls' club."

I know a girl who came as student of the decorative arts with \$150 cash and a leaning toward artistic furnishing. She lived carefree in the colicking tourist

and seek between those Paris and London scholarships during her honeymoon. Would you call it idling that she waited in the hostel, board free, getting culture and technique in moderation, secretly playing the tourist till her husband's year was up in London?

Of course there is borrowing. Systematic borrowing is not played out in Paris, even for men. The clientele is often renewed; all consists in making acquaintances. Who shall criticize an earnest, frugal, plain dressed, ambitious girl for drawing on her future?

There was a girl student of painting whose brother did not always keep his promise to send her \$1 a week. When quite broke she went systematically borrowing. She gathered together \$200 in six separate touches, all from American women she met in Paris. She paid up her arrears at the Rue de Chevreuse Club and continued in its cheapest room. During a year she put in twelve hours a day at one of the strongest women's academies. She succeeded, and now gets \$650 apiece for a new kind of art, painting pictures according to the exact ideas of rich connoisseurs.

The nearest to a fraud I ever met was Guinevere. She came to study architecture—the first of her sex. At the Rue de Turin she became doubly a heroine by whispering, "I am married, but no one must know it."

Back there in Philadelphia he was sending Guinevere a monthly check. When it ceased sympathy for the wife swallowed up distrust for the debtor. Nor did Guinevere abuse our sympathy. Owing



"THE WOMAN OF FIFTY, AS GIDDY AS A SCHOOLGIRL."

I saw no more of her for a full year. One afternoon, accompanying some ladies to the hostel, I heard Guinevere's voice declaiming "Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

"She's gone back to medicine," I mused.

her three red tickets in her hand, and whispering:

"I'm a winner of the Grand Prix. Help me cash my \$60."

She had won on a newspaper tip! But, alas! she did not receive \$60. The pari-mutuel betting is like throwing all the stake into a hat and dividing them in proportion among those who pick the winner. A rush on Baron Maurice de Rothschild's Verdun had brought his price down to 5 to 1. When she received her \$30 she said simply:

"You are sure that cream suit costs \$60?"



"THE NEAREST TO A FRAUD I EVER MET WAS GUINEVERE."

Then she disappeared again. Few will forget the two races following on that Grand Prix, carried off by outsiders at 20 to 1 and 25 to 1. I saw my dear old friend after the Prix Vaulblanc. She had lost \$30 on the favorite.

"Quit," we said, "you are even."

She looked on me pityingly and disappeared again. George saw her buying



"EACH MORNING AFTER WASHING THEY DELIGHTED IN ITS COILING."

tickets on Robinson and Ingou. It was the last race.

"I have this race tied up in a neat package," she said when she returned. "A man told me to fortify with the Lieux stable, double chances, probably only even money, expensive, but sure. My, it takes a lot of trouble to win \$60."

While she spoke the field's riotous roar told that another favorite had lost, and we knew that an elderly lady, tragically silent, had lost \$65. I was glad to put her safely in her pension. "We have seen the death of a great hope," I whispered to Daisy.

I thought so. I did not yet know femininity plus Paris-Brilliant. Ten days later that woman of sixty bore down on us gloriously in the cream serge suit.

"I bought it all the same," she said. "Yes, sixty-five dollars. Now I must have a hat."

She looked great. She had tampered with her summer tourist money, and she could never be the same again.



"SHE WILL BORROW UNTIL TOURISTS FLEE FROM HER."

adventuress is this who would content herself with the bread and butter calm of a girls' club?

She must have been a student at heart to stand it.

This is why the patrons and clear sighted matrons of the clubs are easy on the score of adventuresses. Any adventuress under 40 who can stand the life is welcome. It is the adventuress over 40 who constitutes at once the delight and despair of the colony.

When the American matron with a past of constricted self-denial once takes the bit between her teeth in Paris she risks a glorious run with a tragic ending.

A dear old tourist of 60 went to the Grand Prix races. Her usual getup had the lines of a bag of potatoes. She saw a cream serge suit on a handsome girl. She fell to that cream suit.

"Do Grand Prix winners sometimes win as much as \$20 for \$2?" she asked me. "What would that cream suit cost?"

I said, "Yes, and 'Sixty dollars.' There are numerous starters.

I had almost forgotten her; but, when the three minutes strain broke into a roar of "Verdun!" "De Rothschild!" the dear old lady from America puffed up,

"I have changed to vocal music."



"HE HAD COME ABROAD AS TUTOR WITH A WEALTHY FAMILY AND ACCEPTED A CAPRICIOUS DISCHARGE."

And if literature consists in amiably promising writeups Guinevere was strong. Mystery followed her. "I am married, but no one must know it," she would say. Everybody knew it. When the check failed she was a heroine. Six months later she was at Trinity Lodge.

"How is literature?" I asked.

"Please do not mention it," she said. "I have changed to vocal music."

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"SHE SUCCEEDED, AND NOW GETS \$650 APIECE FOR A NEW KIND OF ART—PAINTING PICTURES ACCORDING TO THE EXACT IDEAS OF RICH CONNOISSEURS."

ized by Mrs. Whitney-Hoff, "like a letter in the box" at \$5 a week, its usual philanthropic price for board and lodging, bath and laundry, and went to work.

Now there are some first impression stories any one can write in Paris with compelling ardor, and it is easy to picture the life one lives. In two months this girl had done articles that later brought her \$200 and about \$15 cash; but she had spent \$45 for board and \$15 for incidentals, and there remained \$55 plus a growing conviction that she was written out. In the succeeding two months she sold \$25 worth of articles, mostly written previously, acquired a lot of culture and had \$27 remaining.

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"THE PARTIES ENJOYED THEMSELVES AND WAKED UP ONE DAY ALL BUT BROKE."

prised at such moderation. "A man would have gone broke or struck it richer."

"I had little to spend outside my \$5 board," she answered. "The clubs give much artistic education free. Certain lectures in museums belong to cheap paying courses, but I went about with other parties gratis. The afternoon tea is free. Girls with money often took me in cabs."

She had to work. The hostel accepting only students, she found a \$5 a week

of my adventures in the decorative arts.

"Can you sketch things?" he asked. "Know styles? Studied drawing? We will try you in Paris hats."

She laughs at her failure in hats, now that she travels as the firm's scout between Paris, Vienna and New York. She failed in hats, failed in confections, failed in copying the great ladies' gowns; but there is an important line of art knickknacks, small furniture novelties and specialties in leather, mirrors and gilt metal and a hundred others in which she so succeeded that to-day she does her firm's buying in them. She has a place beyond her dreams and in a field of sure enough art.

She too had the wit to represent that work as specialized study without pay or the club would not have kept her. Only one club, that of the Rue de Turin, the Y. W. C. A., accepts girls who frankly work.

But \$5 a week for board and dainty lodgings in Paris; is it not abused by idlers? A young Philadelphian married on the strength of winning a year's scholarship in England. The bride, not to be left out of the bridal trip, came as far as Paris with him. She easily won the hostel painting scholarship.

So bride and bridegroom played hide

and seek between those Paris and London scholarships during their honeymoon.

of privation and gross luxury—they would hand the roll to him and say, "You speak French; do the ordering!"—did not shake his probity. Yet the last time I saw him he looked like a trapped criminal.

"I sail to-morrow second class," he said feverishly. "I could not stand it any longer. Last night again I guided

take a draft "for collection"—if you put up \$2 protest and expenses. If you suggest timidly to "leave out the protest," they look askance at you.

What other resource is left? The American Relief Society? In truth, men when broke don't trouble the society. If they must beg they prefer to strike an unknown fellow countryman. The

jolly tourist's hand goes promptly to his pocket.

"What, you have been reckless, dissipated? We are reckless, dissipated, too! Here's a \$1 gold piece."

Why, do you know there are Americans in Paris who never accept less than a \$5 loan?

"When we are broke they take us for English."



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men," was her explanation. Illness, return and surprise funds no longer exist for her. She is in a swell pension and proposes to "chaperon girls" and "accompany tourists shopping."

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As long as she keeps well dressed the life may serve her, but a day will come when she will find herself in a cold mansard without board and without her trunk. Age will bar her from the Y. W. C. A. and the girls' club. She will be a case for unconvicted charity, and as it means shunting to America she will dodge it, hoping ever to get reestablished.

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"Many have taken it," I said tolerantly. "I took it," he wailed. "In four places I took the rakeoff of vice—in order to quit Paris. Seventy dollars was the total. I sail for America to-morrow."

The cultivated American could find no guide in Paris but guiding. He could guide, he was instructive, illuminating; yet apart from the dishonorable profits of night life he found it a wretched expedient. Neither tourists nor business

men are keen to be guided by day, and I have wondered why business firms send representatives abroad who have not already seen Paris by night. Score-headed and sleepy, they accomplish a little that their report of "no opening" is readily credited.

This is the secret of most of the alleged bunco losses of the Boulevard. The

parties have enjoyed themselves, and waked up one day all but broke. The bunco story is told to maintain credit. "Rich American Buncoed Out of \$2,000!" run the headlines. Ample credit opens. I have known banks to cash drafts on it!

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